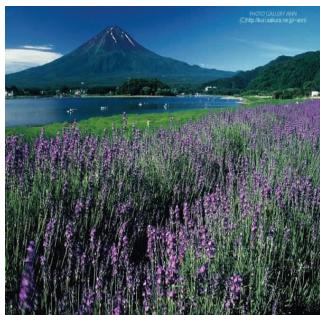


COPD—Adult Asthma

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Did You Know?

Other names for COPD:

- Chronic obstructive airway disease
- Chronic obstructive lung disease

In the U.S., COPD includes:

- Emphysema
- Chronic Bronchitis

Most people with COPD are at least 40 years old or around middle age when symptoms start. It is unusual, but possible, for people less than 40 years old to have COPD.

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What is Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)?

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a lung disease in which the lung is damaged, making it hard to breathe. In COPD, the airways—the tubes that carry air in and out of your lungs—are partly obstructed, making it difficult to get air in and out.

Cigarette smoking is the most common cause of COPD. Most people with COPD are smokers or former smokers. Breathing in other kinds of lung irritants, like pollution, dust, or chemicals over a long period of time may also cause or contribute to COPD.

The airways branch out like an upside-down tree, and at the end of each branch are many small, balloon-like air sacs. In healthy people, each airway is clear and open, the air sacs are small and dainty, and both are elastic and springy. When you breathe in, each air sac fills up with air, like a small balloon, and when you breathe out, the balloon deflates and the air goes out. In COPD, the airways and air sacs lose their shape and become floppy. Less air gets in and less air goes out because:

- The airways and air sacs lose their elasticity (like an old rubber band)
- The walls between many of the air sacs are destroyed
- The walls of the airways become thick and inflamed (swollen)
- Cells in the airways make more mucus (sputum) than usual, which tends to clog the airways.

COPD develops slowly, and it may be many years before you notice symptoms like feeling short of breath. Most of the time, COPD is diagnosed in middle-aged or older people.

COPD is a major cause of death and illness throughout the world. It is the **4th leading cause of death** in the U.S. and the world. There is no cure for COPD. The damage to your airways and lungs cannot be reversed, but there are things you can do to feel better and slow the damage to your lungs.

COPD is not contagious—you cannot catch it from someone else.

What is Asthma?

Asthma (Az-muh) is a chronic disease that changes your airways. The airways are the tubes that carry air in and out of your lungs. If you have asthma, the inside walls of your airways are swollen. This swelling makes the airways very sensitive, and they tend to react strongly to things that you are allergic to or find irritating. When the airways react, they get smaller, and less air flows through to your lung tissue. This causes symptoms (problems) like wheezing (a whistling sound when you breathe), coughing, chest tightness, and trouble breathing. These symptoms may be worse at night or in the early morning.



When your asthma symptoms become worse than usual, it is called an asthma attack. You will need to learn what things cause your asthma symptoms and how to avoid them. Some of the more common causes include exercise, allergens, irritants, and viral infections.

Not all asthma attacks are the same and some are worse than others. In a bad asthma attack, the airways can close so much that not enough oxygen gets to vital organs. This condition is a medical emergency and people can die from a bad asthma attack. Taking care of your asthma is an important part of your life.

If you have asthma:



- See your healthcare provider on a regular basis.
- Take your medicines as directed by your healthcare provider.
- Stay away from things that bother your airways.
- Be aware of your asthma symptoms so that you can respond quickly to signs of an attack.



There is not a cure for asthma but it can be controlled so you will have fewer symptoms or asthma attacks. Start controlling your asthma today and every day!

Asthma Action Plan

Asthma Action Plan for _____

Date _____

Healthcare Provider's Name _____

Phone Number _____

Hospital/Emergency Room Phone Number _____

GREEN ZONE: Doing Well

- No cough, wheeze, chest tightness, or shortness of breath during the day or night
- Can do usual activities

And, if a peak flow meter is used,**Peak flow:** more than _____
(80% or more of my best peak flow)

My best peak flow is: _____

Take These Long-Term-Control Medicines Each Day (include an anti-inflammatory)

Medicine	How much to take	When to take it

Before Exercise

_____ 2 or 4 puffs 5 to 60 minutes before exercise

YELLOW ZONE: Asthma is Getting Worse

- Cough, wheeze, chest tightness, or shortness of breath, or
- Waking at night due to asthma, or
- Can do some, but not all, usual activities

OR**Peak flow:** _____ to _____
(50% - 80% of my best peak flow)*Add: Quick-Relief Medicine—and keep taking your GREEN ZONE medicine*

_____ 2 or 4 puffs, every 20 minutes for up to 1 hr
(short-acting beta₂-agonist) Nebulizer, once

If your symptoms (and peak flow, if used) *return to GREEN ZONE* after 1 hour of above treatment:

- Take the quick-relief medicine every 4 hours for 1 to 2 days.
- Double the dose of your inhaled steroid for _____ (7-10) days.

OR

If your symptoms (and peak flow, if used) *do not return to GREEN ZONE* after 1 hour of above treatment:

- Take: _____ 2 or 4 puffs or Nebulizer
(short-acting beta₂-agonist)
- Add: _____ mg. per day for _____ (3-10) days
(oral steroid)
- Call your healthcare provider before / within _____ hours after taking the oral steroid.

RED ZONE: Medical Alert!

- Very short of breath, or
- Quick-relief medicines have not helped, or
- Cannot do usual activities, or
- Symptoms are same or get worse after 24 hours in Yellow Zone

OR**Peak flow:** less than _____
(50% of my best peak flow)

Take this medicine:

_____ 4 or 6 puffs or Nebulizer
(short-acting beta₂-agonist)

_____ mg.
(oral steroid)

Then call your healthcare provider NOW. Go to the hospital or call for an ambulance if:

- You are still in the red zone after 15 minutes AND
- You have not reached your healthcare provider.

DANGER SIGNS

- Trouble walking and talking due to shortness of breath
- Lips or fingernails are blue
- Take 4 or 6 puffs of your quick-relief medicine AND
- Go to the hospital or call for an ambulance (_____) **NOW!**



Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Department for Medicaid Services
Medical Management and Quality Assurance
275 E. Main Street, 6C-C
Frankfort, Kentucky 40621

Smoking and Health Risks

The adverse health effects from cigarette smoking account for 440,000 deaths, or nearly 1 of every 5 deaths, each year in the United States. More deaths are caused each year by tobacco use than by all deaths from human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, and murders combined.



Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and has negative health impacts on people at all stages of life. It harms unborn babies, infants, children, adolescents, adults, and seniors.

*This information is for educational purposes, it is not intended to replace medical advice from your healthcare provider.
Please consult your healthcare provider for advice about a specific medical condition.*